

Does Anyone Know a Nurse Named Deb Who Went to Uganda?

Submitted by Lauren T. Taquino

That was the question asked in a nursing leadership meeting at Children's Hospital a few weeks ago. Apparently, someone was contacting the Foundation Office to try to locate this nurse. The story goes on and gets better than that, but you'll have to ask her for the rest of the details.

PNANN most definitely knows a nurse named Deb (Anzalone), and she's been to Uganda, not once but twice in the last year. She is a staff nurse in the Infant ICU at CHRMC and previously worked at the UWMC in the NICU. She's a PNANN member and featured speaker at the upcoming conference. Anyone who knows her will tell you she's something special, but we only know the half of it.

While working in Bermuda, Deb met up with some folks who would change her life and in turn, help her to change the lives of many others. Working through the ISIS Foundation, she has traveled to Africa to help train and prepare the staff of a tiny hospital to provide the basics of specialized neonatal care. Most of her work has centered around training and certifying the care providers there in the Neonatal Resuscitation Program. While working there, she's also been able to help provide one-on-one consultation and

demonstration of basic thermal care, oxygen delivery and enteral support for the infants of the village and some others who happened to be in the area (another interesting story to ask her about).

Lodgings at the hospital proved to be a bit challenging for Deb, as her room was fully inhabited by bats and other nightly delights. Despite long hours, grueling travel and heartbreaking hardships, she has clearly fallen in love with the people and the cause. Between trips, Deb worked equally hard to secure supplies and equipment that might help increase the level of support available to the growing nursery. Getting the supplies proved to be only half the battle. PNANN was able to help support transportation of some suction equipment that was donated by a family that no longer needed them.

Here's an excerpt from an email she sent home on the last trip...

A big hello to everyone, Uganda....Kiwoko hospital....Great to be back!! Arriving back was a bit like coming home (you know what I mean Mom!) I met up with Lizette and Charles and we headed off to the hospital. Lizette is a Pediatrician

I met last year in South Africa and has become a very good friend. She was wonderful to work with and her company a pleasure.

The greeting we received from everyone at Kiwoko was so warm and welcome.

Lots of smiling faces and lots of tales of all their neonatal resuscitations over the last year!! :-)) They must think I eat, breathe and sleep resuscitations. I felt as if I had never left. The air is so hot and humid. Lots of beautiful sights and sounds.

We spent the first day getting reacquainted with the hospital and the various changes that have occurred and then ready to start the Neonatal Resuscitation training the next day.

Now before I go on I know many of you that I e-mailed last year will be curious to know about that guest house and my friends.....the

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Uganda

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bats!! Well, I am ecstatic to report that the house has been renovated and completely gutted. There were many jokes about my "little outbursts" last year in response to my night time visitors. They did tell me all that they found in that little room and I'm sure glad I only knew the half of it!!?? My old room remains at the top of the house all locked up and everytime I looked at it I had many fond memories....Not! I admit the first night in my new room I had a little trouble getting into bed as a big cockroach loomed overhead and my mind wondering what was in store for me. I finally had to summons Charles to "remedy" the cockroach situation. I can attest to the fact that nobody had a mosquito net tucked in tighter and more secure than I!! Nothing was getting in that bed! As the days went on I had wonderful sleeps falling asleep to the wonderful sounds of Africa. The only interruptions were an occasional knock on the



door and maternity staff looking for "sister Debbie" to come resuscitate a baby or something along those lines!!

My first day on the job as I was to start the classes I got called to see an infant who had been born in a taxi and they were having trouble with him. I arrived and we spent about 4 hours to stabilize him as best we could. It was wonderful to see the staff using all of the steps taught last year and all of the same equipment. It was over this baby that I saw many of the staff and we all wondered if I bring these types of situations with me when I come since that was the type of thing that happened all last year! They kept saying "Debbie's back."

We did 4 full days of resuscitation training putting 2 groups through. We put 20 people through the program and counting the 30 people from last year that is a really great number of staff through the pro-

gram. The staff are just as hard working as ever. They are eager for education, grateful for all we brought and full of smiles and hugs. We did the testing the next week and put in a long 14 hour day trying to get everyone through. We ended up getting set back as a 30 wk infant was born about 1000gms by emergency c/s so I was held up with that. We delayed the testing a bit while we stabilized the baby putting in IV's, oxygen and settled into the incubator.

We had a wonderful ceremony and gave out all of the certificates of those who did the program last year. It was really nice because many of the staff came in full uniform. They were very excited to receive this piece of paper and would flash a big smile to the audience when it was presented to them.

There was much excitement over the arrival of the big equipment. Over 1000lbs including 2 incubators (very nice condition), baby lin-

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